



Citizen Stewardship

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A look at the numbers...

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8,000,000,000
hours volunteered in 2009



8 billion

Number of hours that more than 63 million people (nearly 20% of Americans) volunteered in 2009.



\$300 billion

Amount US citizens donated to charitable organizations in 2010 (about 2% of GDP)

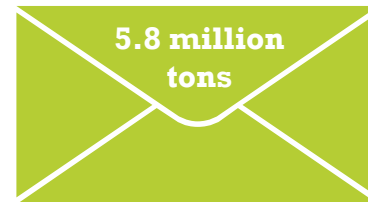
If everyone in the world lived like Americans, **we would need 5 planets** to produce what we consume and absorb our waste.



5 planets

Each year,
5.8 million tons of envelopes eventually end up as

450 thousand garbage trucks worth of waste.

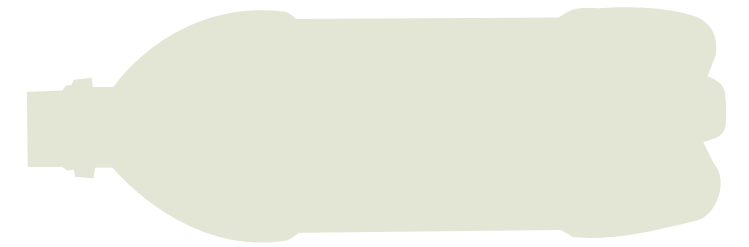


100 million

Number of trees that could be saved by eliminating all junk mail.

Millions of people and thousands of companies have opted out of junk mail through **donotmail.org** and **catalogchoice.org**.

US consumers buy more than **half a billion gallons of bottled water** every week, enough bottles to circle the globe 5 times.



17 million

Number of barrels of oil (used in manufacturing plastic water bottles) that would be saved by kicking the bottled water habit

100,000 cars

could run for a year on the oil saved.

20 tons

CO2 emissions:

The average North American generates about **20 tons of CO2 emissions** per year.

1,100 lbs

Amount of CO2 emissions that could be prevented by turning the thermostat down 3°F in the winter and up 3°F in the summer.

2,500 lbs

Amount of CO2 emissions eliminated by getting rid of your second refrigerator.

1,040 lbs

Amount of CO2 emissions that could be saved per year by using public transportation one day a week instead of driving.

The world average is just under **4 tons**.

4 tons



“The most important office... that of private citizen.”
➤ Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis

Justice Brandeis knew firsthand the potential that lies within each of us when we are inspired to act on behalf of the public good. He knew it from personal experience that helped to break up corporate monopolies, enact workplace safety and ensure freedom of speech.

Today, there are no shortages of problems that need fixing. Making progress toward solving the most pressing issues of our time requires us all to be stewards of each other and our planet.

Stewardship takes many forms. From implementing everyday actions that reduce one’s footprint and organizing for veterans, to young people raising money to build wells and retirees revitalizing their community, the power of engaged citizens is immense.

Citizen stewardship is strong and needs to continue growing.

Paul Rieckhoff created the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), which helps veterans become leaders, advocates for better care and increases awareness about the causes and consequences of war. By 2015, IAVA expects to have 175,000 veteran members and an additional 400,000 supporters.



Photos courtesy Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America



Katie Stagliano rallied hundreds of people in her South Carolina town to create vegetable gardens that feed the hungry.

Ryan Hreljac started in first grade and raised \$70 to help address clean water issues. Ten years later he created a network that built 630 water projects in 16 countries, bringing safe water and sanitation services to 700,880 people.



Photo courtesy Ryan and Ryan's Well Foundation





Photo courtesy NASA

Unified in Stewardship

P : Jerry M. Linenger
: Former NASA Astronaut

erched in space for five months aboard a Russian space station, I saw planet Earth in all its majesty.

White clouds swirling above the churning ocean currents. Brown, green and sometimes reddish continents poking their heads out of the predominance of blue. Fault lines cracking and moving the land masses. Wind storms denuding the topsoil of drought-stricken Sub-Saharan Africa and depositing that same soil on the leeward side of the Andes. Africa's loss, South America's gain. A thousand points of light shining through the deep green jungles of Brazil as the trees are burned to make way for more farms. Alive, dynamic, burning, swirling, spewing planet Earth.

I have heard other astronauts talk about the delicacy of the Earth and its many inhabitants. Indeed, when viewing the delimiter at Earth sunrise or sunset, the band of atmosphere is narrow, thin, seemingly clutching to the curvature of the Earth. I have heard them talk about the lack of political borders. One land, one Earth, all shared. True also. But my overwhelming impression after closely observing Earth for over 150 days was that the Earth is alive. Alive, breathing and buffering. A remarkably regenerative miracle, the Earth is ever-so dynamic. Ever changing, always adapting and renewing itself. The Earth is incredible, an extremely complex, closed ecosystem that for millions of years has supported life. A system so intrinsically intertwined, so time-tested and fine-tuned, that it is beyond our comprehension.

The over-consumption and individual insults to our planet do add up, and the consequences are beginning to show themselves at an alarming rate.

A space station essentially tries to mimic the processes of the Earth. We try to create a closed ecosystem that will support life. To be frank, we are not very good at it, and the only way that we can accomplish the task, even for short periods of time, is to cheat. That is, we supplement the life-support systems onboard by bringing along supplies taken from the planet. We are more like a modern-day camper than a forager of old who truly lived off of the land. To date, we have only been able to keep a few people alive in space at a time, and only at great cost and by bringing most of the gear and supplies with us.

Given the challenges associated with maintaining life without the benefit of the Earth's many life-supporting systems, we need to recognize the Earth as a miracle—a blessing to us. We must also shift our perspective and begin to see the Earth as a whole.

Forget the “kumbaya” feeling of looking down at an Earth with no borders between nations. Forget the chants of “can’t we all just love one another?” But think if all of us on Earth could move toward a common perspective for one common problem that concerns us all. This common goal, in all of our interests, can perhaps move us beyond our differences, shift our perspective and make us realize that we are all in this closed ecosystem together. Can we be united in at least this one reality? Can we strive to keep Earth healthy and to expand our territorial boundary to the curved edge of

the Earth? If not for us, then we must at least try for our children and our children’s children.

For the record, I am not a fan of the “one world, one government” philosophy. A lot of our problems are local and need to be solved locally. Being cut off from mankind for five months taught me that one of the true blessings of the Earth is the diversity of our people and of our cultures. But after living in a closed ecosystem with two other people, all the while struggling to keep life-support systems functioning, I realized quickly that if we had one weak link in the chain, we would all suffer the consequences. One of the three of us not doing our job, one of us pushing the wrong button at the wrong time, one of us not “knowing our stuff” and improperly maintaining or repairing an oxygen generating system in a timely matter, and we all die. This underscored the importance of being there for each other as well.

In a closed ecosystem, with three on board, it is very easy to tell if you are the weak link in the chain. On our big, incredibly complex and self-correcting planet, populated with billions of people who for the most part are just trying to scratch out an existence, the effect of our individual actions are much more difficult to ascertain. But the consequences of our actions do exist. The over-consumption and individual insults to our planet do add up. And the consequences are beginning to show themselves at an alarming rate.

Indonesia is the most biodiverse region in the world, and unfortunately also has the highest rate of deforestation in the world, mainly due to our high demand for paper products and palm oil.



Go to dream
to get the book



This NASA photo shows the vast reach of humanity on planet Earth.

Photo courtesy NASA

It sure is easy to point fingers. But none of us should feel smug. We are the corporations, we are the governments, we are the citizens of our countries. We are the people of the Earth and taking action to conserve and live lighter on the planet can save forests, reduce climate impacts, prevent pollution, sustain communities, and preserve this planet's amazing diversity of life. Our voices and actions help to shape innovative government policies and business practices, and create a groundswell that will eventually permeate all of our institutions. Whether it's recycling or buying organic and local, helping to build a health clinic, getting rid of the second refrigerator and replacing light bulbs, driv-

ing less or not driving at all, eating less meat, serving those in need or being the environmental champion in a company or government position, or the myriad other options, every small or large step is meaningful. We as individuals can all be citizen-stewards.

And though the awareness and efforts to bring about these necessary changes are spreading, the pace of that unifying change is important as well. As individuals and as citizens of the nations of the world, we must quickly realize the balance needed on our planet before our efforts are too late. The pace of innovation needs to be laps ahead of the rate of degradation and extinction.

Taking action to conserve and live lighter on the planet can save forests, reduce climate impacts, prevent pollution & preserve this planet's amazing diversity of life.

I can tell you plainly that our Earth and the diversity of life and cultures within it are special. If we shift our perspective and broaden our territorial boundary to encompass the planet as a whole, individually, we will do the right thing. We must let common sense be our guide, treating our closed Earth ecosystem with the same care that we would if we were an astronaut aboard a space station, a space station that we can only marvel at, that has functioned for millions of years and

that we will never be able to replicate. The environment should not be a battleground between different political factions, nor should it be the cause of inter-governmental confrontation. Instead, it is a common ground that stretches across the entire political spectrum and, indeed, across all man-made boundaries. It is one issue that needs to unite us all.

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Dr. Jerry M. Linenger is a Naval Academy graduate holding a doctorate of medicine from Wayne State University and doctorate of philosophy from the University of North Carolina. In his mission on Mir, he logged 50 million miles in more than 2,000 orbits of Earth at 18,000 miles per hour. He was the first American to undock from the space station in Soyuz spacecraft and the first American to perform a spacewalk outside a foreign spacecraft; at the completion of the mission, he had spent more time in space than any American man.



Staying Within Our Limits

The last 200 years have transformed the American continent. Forests have given way to skyscrapers; fertile valleys bloomed with subdivisions and dot-com office parks; open plains have been cross-hatched with railway lines and interstates. Technology and industry have allowed us to vastly multiply the rate with which we can harvest nature's bounty. Yet, for all our 21st-century gadgetry and cyberspace-based commerce, we are still as dependent upon nature as the trappers and fisherman of our pre-industrial past—if not more so. And unfortunately, we have become so good at exploiting nature—not just as a country but as a species—that we are now reaping much more than what nature can renew.

Globally, humans use nature 50 percent faster than planet Earth can renew those resources and absorb the waste, such as CO2.¹ This means that it takes the planet almost a year and a half to regenerate the resources humans use in one year. In the US, however, our demand on nature's services is much greater than the world average. According to Global Footprint Network's 2010 National Footprint Accounts, if everyone lived like an American, it would take almost five planets to produce what we consume and absorb our waste.

Mathis Wackernagel
Global Footprint Network



Globally, humans are now using nature 50 percent faster than planet Earth can renew those resources and absorb the waste, such as CO2.

The consequences of this overspending are dire. In the last two years, America has been wrestling with the biggest economic downturn in recent history, the result of years of living beyond our means. Yet for decades, we have also been living beyond our ecological means, and the risks of this debt dwarf those of the current financial crisis. With nature, unlike with the financial crisis, no bailout is possible.

The accounting is simple: We currently have only one planet that supports life. The surface of Earth is about 125 billion acres. But since most is ice, desert and deep ocean, only about one-quarter of it is productive (fishing grounds, forests, grazing land, crop land, etc.). With a world population of about 7 billion, this gives us roughly 5 acres per person. That's the budget.

Unfortunately, by the 1980s, human demand on resources was systematically exceeding the budget of what nature could renewably provide, a condition known as ecological overshoot. Overshoot has many manifestations: climate change is the most prominent and visible indicator that human pressure on the planet has reached a critical point. Particularly in the industrialized nations, carbon emissions from fossil fuel have become the dominant pressure exerted by humanity on nature. Yet it is certainly not the only pressure.

We are already seeing other disturbing signs of planetary overuse: peak energy, biodiversity loss, depleted fisheries, soil erosion and freshwater stress to name a few. We are facing a global supply-demand crunch of essential resources—an era that author and educator Richard Heinberg aptly calls “peak everything.”²

In an era of multiple resource pressures, it makes little sense to argue which peak is more important. They are all part of the same phenomenon: we are simply putting more demand on nature's services than it can

handle. By addressing the common cause, we can rectify our path, rather than solving one problem at the expense of another.

To balance the books on our use of nature, we need clear metrics by which to understand and measure human pressures. The Ecological Footprint is one such tool, telling us how much nature we have, how much we use and who uses what.

What the Ecological Footprint Tells Us

Everything we consume—from a fresh tomato at the farmers' market to the plasma screen TV in the living room—originates in material that comes from nature. The Ecological Footprint tallies all the resources it takes to support a person's or population's lifestyle—the energy to power their homes, the cars they drive to work, the gifts they buy for their children's birthdays, etc.—and calculates the land and sea required to produce those resources and absorb the related waste, including CO2 emissions. The Ecological Footprint also includes each person's share of their society's infrastructure: schools, hospitals, military, highway systems and the like.

One planet and about 7 billion residents gives us roughly 5 global acres per person.



It now takes the planet almost a year and six months to regenerate the resources humans use in one year.



The average person's footprint in the US is 20 global acres.*

* All data from Global Footprint Network
2010 National Footprint Accounts.

In the US, the average person's Ecological Footprint is 20 global acres, the equivalent of 18 football fields.

And then there are countries like China, whose average Footprint is a little more than 5.1 global acres, close to the global budget.



In China, 5.1 global acres.*

Ecological Footprint accounting enables us to compare human demand against biocapacity—what nature can supply—in the same way that financial accounting tracks expenditures against income. It allows us to look at nature's entire budget, rather than its separate components.

According to the most recent data, the average Ecological Footprint per capita was just under 7 acres per person. However, some countries' resource demands are significantly greater than average, and many are substantially smaller. In the US, the average person's Ecological Footprint is 20 global acres, the equivalent of 18 football fields.³

At the other end of the spectrum are countries like Haiti, Afghanistan and Malawi with Ecological Footprints of less than 1.3 global acres per capita—in most cases, too small to provide for the basic needs for food, housing and sanitation.

Resource consumption in the US breaks down as follows: How we get around—cars, airplanes, buses and trains—accounts for 24 percent of our Footprint. Housing and utilities account for 19 percent; food for 15 percent; services for 20 percent and goods for 11 percent. Our per capita share of government spending—infrastructure such as highways, bridges and dams—accounts for 11 percent.

For most activities in industrialized countries, the majority of the activity's Ecological Footprint is due to carbon emissions. In the US, the carbon Footprint (the amount of land and sea it would take to absorb all the carbon we emit) is 70 percent of our total Footprint. Worldwide, carbon accounts for half the Ecological Footprint and is its most rapidly growing component, having increased 700 percent since 1961.

Retooling Our Society for a Resource-Constrained Age

Although high-income nations tend to be clustered at the high end of the Footprint scale, nations with similar living standards—as measured by UN statistics on longevity, income, literacy rate, child mortality and other

factors—can have very different levels of resource consumption. The average resident of the European Union, for example, has a Footprint half that of the average American (although still well above what is replicable worldwide).

Why is this the case? The answer lies partially in the way our societies are structured. Consider Italy, which has a per capita Footprint of 12 acres.

Most people live in compact cities, where they can walk to work, school and shopping or use extensive bus and train systems. Public transportation is easily accessible and is often more convenient and cheaper than driving. People get much of their food from local markets and food producers and eat less packaged and frozen food.

Also, by being in more compact cities with less housing surface per person, the houses consume less energy for cooling and heating.

In the US, some of our Ecological Footprint is related to individual choices we make that affect our resource consumption. Much of our Ecological Footprint, however, is the result of infrastructure decisions made by business leaders and policy-makers, in some cases decades ago: decisions such as investing in highways rather than public transportation, and suburban growth over concentrated, urban development.

Considering the rapid escalation of overshoot and the slow rate at which human institutions, land-use patterns, infrastructure and populations change, the most

A family and their belongings in Bhutan.



Photos courtesy Peter Menzel from his book, *Marginal World*

A family and their belongings in the US.



critical action steps must focus on decisions that affect us for many years. Human-made infrastructure—homes, roads, office structures, power plants, dams, transportation systems—may last 50 or 100 years and shape our way of living for their lifetime.

The Ecological Footprint can help leaders and policy-makers understand what choices will have the farthest-reaching, most systemic positive or negative impact. As we decide where to put our money and efforts, we must ask—and press our leaders to ask—the following question: are we investing in resource opportunities

that allow us to live efficiently or resource traps that force us into highly resource consumptive lifestyles?

Striving for Better

Each year, the amount of resources we demand per person increases. Meanwhile, the amount of people competing for these resources also increases. And as we continue to use up nature faster than it can renew itself, we liquidate our stocks of these resources, further tightening the budget of what is available.

Our five-planet level of resource consumption in the US is physically impossible to replicate worldwide. Yet

Our five-planet level of resource consumption in the US is physically impossible to replicate worldwide.

we all know there is a strong desire and urgency to live like Americans. As the world’s resource debt grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to secure a higher level of resource consumption for vast segments of humanity. Therefore, we have a problem. If we continue to build our success on using ever more resources, we are preparing for our demise. At the same time, if we can push the ingenuity and revisioning needed to address our resource challenges, we can be best positioned to benefit from the future, rather than be steamrolled by it.

While the data may be shocking, there are key opportunities to reverse current trends, among them creating

resource-efficient cities and infrastructure, fostering best-practice green technology and innovation and making resource limits central to decision-making at all levels of leadership. And the good news is future-proofing our economies has tremendous

payback. Sustainability doesn’t simply save the planet; it also ensures a long-term revenue stream for pioneer investors—those with the foresight to plan and make changes now for resource constraints in the future.

Human ingenuity has transformed the way we use nature. We must now put that talent toward another transformation: creating a society that provides prosperity and opportunity within the bounds of what the planet can provide.

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Mathis Wackernagel, PhD, is a founder and president of Global Footprint Network (www.footprintnetwork.org), an international think-tank supporting the creation of a sustainable economy by advancing the use of the Ecological Footprint. Wackernagel has worked on sustainability issues and lectured at more than 100 universities on all continents except Antarctica. Wackernagel, along with Professor William Rees, created the “Ecological Footprint” concept, now a widely used sustainability measure. Wackernagel’s awards include an honorary doctorate from the University of Berne, a 2007 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, a 2006 WWF Award for Conservation Merit and the 2005 Herman Daly Award of the US Society for Ecological Economics.



What About Your Footprint?

Calculate your family’s Footprint and make a commitment to **cut it in half**. Visit Global Footprint Network’s website www.footprintnetwork.org to calculate now.

For steps on how you can **make the changes that matter**, see Center for a New American Dream’s essay, *Key Steps For Living Lighter*. (page 58)



Living Lighter

For generations, the American way of life centered on freedom and opportunity—the American Dream. The dream was rooted in the belief that, in a peaceful and democratic society, citizens were free to pursue their goals and honest effort would result in a satisfactory degree of material comfort. The idealistic notion that in America one might reasonably aspire to a better life for oneself and one’s family was a powerful symbol. It spoke not merely to personal aspirations but to our aim as a society as well.

Unfortunately, in the latter half of the 20th century, the traditional American Dream was overshadowed by a “more is better” focus that promoted not quality of life, but rather the unbridled production and consumption of stuff. While this simplified version of the dream successfully boosted our economy’s material production and consumption, it has failed in more important ways. According to studies, all this material wealth didn’t make us any happier than we were before the boom. Worse yet, shifting the prize from well-being to acquisition actually endangers some of the very things we cherish, such as leisure time, time spent with family and friends, along with clean air and water.

More than 90 percent of Americans agree that we are too focused on working and making money and not focused enough on family and community. Fewer than 30 percent of Americans say that having a bigger house or apartment or nicer things would make them much more satisfied with their lives, while more than half say that spending more time with family and friends and having less stress in their lives would make them much more satisfied. More than half of Americans also say they would be willing to trade a day’s pay per week for an extra day off.¹

The “more is better” dream, in fact, is denying our children their fair opportunity for comfort, security, and a healthy environment.

The “more is better” dream is unsustainable personally as it draws American families into a work-and-spend treadmill that depletes savings, clutters lives and decreases health due to increased stress and reduced exercise. It is unsustainable environmentally as it fuels a level of resource consumption with which the planet cannot keep up. The “more is better” dream, in fact, is denying our children their fair opportunity for comfort, security and a healthy environment.

Less Is More

Sustainable consumption is a new vision for our relationship with material resources that meets the needs of both present and future generations in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. It’s essential for a healthy global ecosystem and a just society offering all citizens the freedom, resources and personal security necessary to pursue their dreams, connect with the natural world and enjoy a high quality of life.

Percentage of Americans who say...

...we’re too focused on work and money and not enough on family & community:

90%

...having a bigger house or nicer things would make them more satisfied in life:

30%

...they would be willing to trade one day’s pay per week for an extra day off:

50%

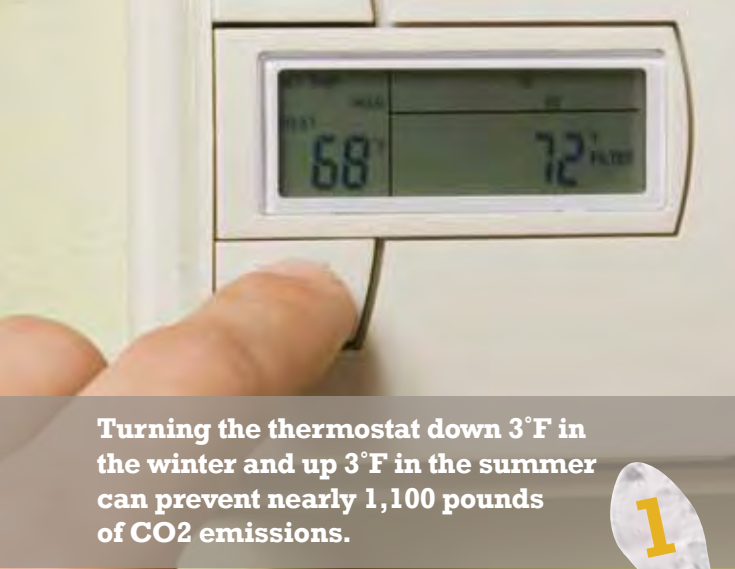


Students spend time out of the city at a retreat to learn about and connect with nature.

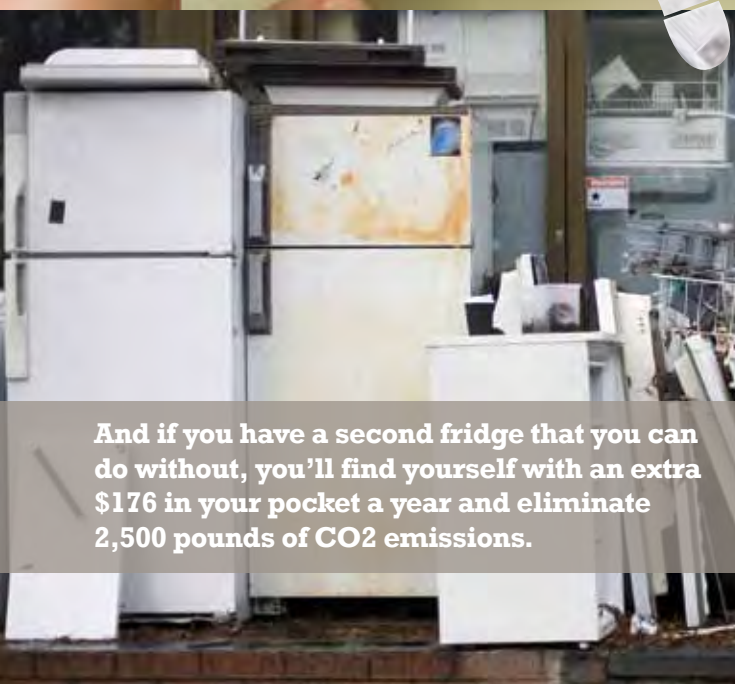
Some people jump into this new cultural vision with both feet. *Voluntary Simplicity* is an example of a social trend that emphasizes less is more. According to Duane Elgin, author of the book *Voluntary Simplicity*, the movement is defined as “living in a way that is outwardly simple and inwardly rich.”²

Others make a conscious effort to infuse sanity into the hyper-commercialized “hot spots” of American life: holidays, weddings and moving day. These folks are pioneering alternative gift fairs, giving homemade meals and babysitting coupons rather than adding another tie to the overstuffed closet. They’re re-focusing the “big days” on the people and relationships that matter, rather than piling up debt and stuff for the sake of cultural expectation. They’re choosing to live in more convenient, though often smaller, homes





Turning the thermostat down 3°F in the winter and up 3°F in the summer can prevent nearly 1,100 pounds of CO2 emissions.



And if you have a second fridge that you can do without, you'll find yourself with an extra \$176 in your pocket a year and eliminate 2,500 pounds of CO2 emissions.



Visit your local farmer's market or co-op and look for place-of-origin labels in the grocery store to choose local at the market.

and apartments rather than “driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for, in order to get to a job that you need so you can pay for the clothes, car and the house that you leave empty all day in order to afford to live in it,” as columnist Ellen Goodman once put it.³

What We All Can Do: Steps for Living Lighter With Big Outcomes

What can we do every day to support and nurture an American Dream that upholds the spirit of the traditional dream—but with a new emphasis on sustainability and a celebration of non-material values? Seemingly small steps do matter and, when taken collectively with others, can really add up, for example:

1. Trim your household energy use: About half the energy use in an average home goes to space heating and cooling. Turning the thermostat down 3°F in the winter and up 3°F in the summer can prevent nearly 1,100 pounds of CO2 emissions and save over \$100 per year.⁴ Replacing your inefficient refrigerator with an Energy Star model will save \$665 over the next five years, and if you have a second fridge that you can do without, you'll find yourself with an extra \$176 in your pocket a year and eliminate 2,500 pounds of CO2 emissions.⁵ Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are four times more efficient and last up to ten times longer than incandescent bulbs. And light-emitting diodes (LEDs) last up to ten times as long as CFLs, use only two to ten watts of electricity and are mercury-free.⁶

2. Eat local and sustainable: Buying local food not only helps local farmers thrive, it also reduces energy consumption. The average food travels from pasture to plate an estimated 1,200 to 2,500 miles.⁷ Even when they are not organic, small farms tend to be less aggressive than large factory farms about dousing their wares with chemicals. Visit your local farmer's market or co-op and look for place-of-origin labels in the grocery store to choose local at the market. Beyond supporting local farmers, look for organic products and humanely raised meat.

No Impact Man: Is Living a Zero-Waste Lifestyle Possible?

In today's society it's incredibly difficult to reduce the amount of trash we create. Look around and you will see trash everywhere (even before it's officially “trash”): paper towels, newspapers, throwaway coffee cups, disposable diapers, plastic water bottles, food packaging. In fact, 80 percent of the products sold in the US are designed to be used once and then thrown away.¹ Every American generates an average of four and half pounds of trash per day.

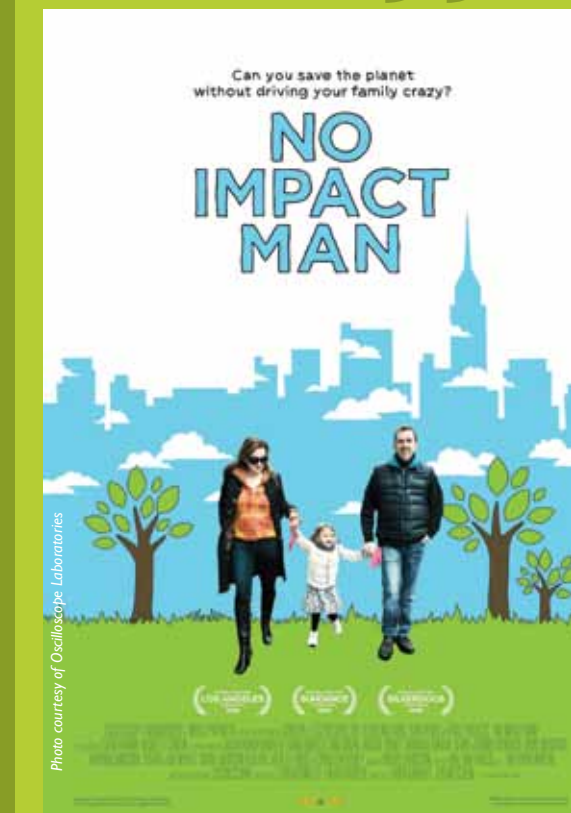
Reducing the amount of garbage we generate would require some extreme lifestyle shifts. One New York City resident wanted to see if it was possible. A self-described “liberal schlub,” Colin Beavan, aka “No Impact Man,” got tired of complaining about the world's problems without doing anything about them. Beavan and his family decided to attempt a zero-waste lifestyle for a year. His efforts to live without making any net impact on the environment were chronicled on his blog, in a book and film. No trash, no carbon emissions, no toxins in the water, no elevators, no subway, no products in packing, no plastics, no air conditioning, no TV were just a few of Beavan's goals.²

In order to reduce his family's trash output, Beavan introduced a number of lifestyle changes such as eliminating canned soda, bottled water, throwaway razors, food in takeout containers, paper coffee cups, disposable diapers, repackaged processed food and instead bought milk in returnable glass bottles, returning egg cartons to the market, carried reusable cloths instead of tissues and napkins, shopped from the bulk bins, used baking soda for toothpaste and deodorant, gave second-hand clothes to charities, and composted food scraps.³

It sounds extreme but Beavan said the project wasn't about becoming an ascetic or anti-materialist; rather it was about being “eco-effective” and finding the middle path.⁴ “From the very get-go, the No Impact project was about a happier planet, happier people,” said Beavan. “Far from depriving ourselves, reducing waste in our lives would move us closer to rather than farther from the lives we actually wanted.”⁵

As a result, the Beavans not only prevented about 5,000 pounds of trash from going to the landfill, they also noticed they were happier, spent less money on “stuff” and were healthier from eating less processed, packaged and pre-prepared food.

“Far from depriving ourselves, reducing waste in our lives would move us closer to rather than farther from the lives we actually wanted.”

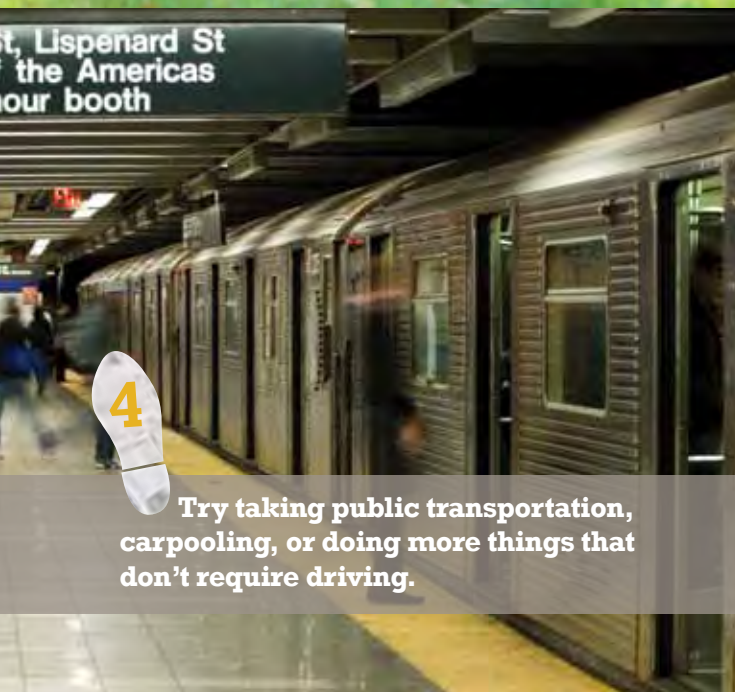


from the editor



Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours, and each ton of copy paper recycled saves the equivalent of 26 trees.

3



Try taking public transportation, carpooling, or doing more things that don't require driving.

4



Look for healthier cleaning alternatives—often labeled as “non-toxic” and biodegradable.”

5

The US is the top trash-producing country in the world at 1,609 pounds per person per year. This means that 5 percent of the world's people generate 40 percent of the world's waste.

3. If you can't reuse it, recycle it and then buy recycled: Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours, and each ton of copy paper recycled saves the equivalent of 26 trees.⁸ On the other side of the recycling spectrum, choose products with recycled-content materials along with recycled and recyclable packaging. New products made from recycled materials are coming on the market every day, such as paper products, clothing, toothbrushes, razors, housewares and home improvement products.

4. Downshift your driving: The average American drives over 250 miles per week, burning more than a dozen gallons of gas, each of which releases roughly 20 pounds of CO₂ into the atmosphere.⁹ Try taking public transportation, carpooling or doing more things that don't require driving. Taking public transportation instead of driving one day per week would reduce your CO₂ emissions by 1,040 pounds per year.¹⁰

5. Get off the toxic train: According to a US Environmental Protection Agency-funded project, the ingredients found in one out of every three commercial cleaning products are potentially harmful.¹¹ These chemicals can cause significant health problems and also find their way into lakes, streams and other water bodies (some of which may serve as drinking water sources). Look for healthier alternatives—often labeled as “non-toxic” and “biodegradable.”¹²

6. Watch your water: The average residential water use in the US is 150 gallons per person per day. In response to the country's decade-long drought, urban areas of Australia were able to go as low as 34 gallons of water per person per day. Native and adaptive plants along with efficient irrigation systems can significantly cut outdoor water use. Look for the US EPA's new WaterSense label for toilets, faucets and shower



The average residential water use in the US is 150 gallons per person per day.

6



Each year more 100 million trees are turned into the 5.8 million tons of mail that end up as 450,000 garbage trucks worth of waste.

7

It's not an either-or situation; it's all hands on deck. And as Lao-Tsu said, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

heads which reduce water use as much as 35 percent.¹³ It's time to take back the tap and say no to bottled water. US consumers buy more than half a billion gallons of bottled water every week, enough bottles to circle the globe more than five times. More than 17 million barrels of oil are used annually to manufacture water bottles—that translates to enough fuel for about 100,000 cars.¹⁴

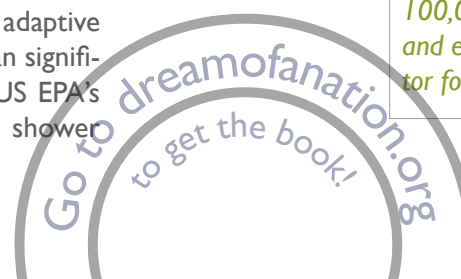
7. Junk your junk mail: Credit card mailers and catalogs might seem insignificant, yet each year more than 100 million trees are turned into the 5.8 million tons of mail that end up as 450,000 garbage trucks worth of waste. And don't forget about the water and climate implications of paper

manufacturing—the production and disposal of all this direct mail consumes more energy than 3 million cars!¹⁵ You can find forms online to opt out of junk mail and reduce your portion of this waste. Visit donotmail.org and catalogchoice.org for more.

Of course, these steps are just a few examples. Look around your community or online and you'll see dozens more. It's vital to keep one eye focused on tackling the hyper-commercialized hot spots and leveraging opportunities to evoke systemic change, but let's not let anyone tell us that small steps won't make a difference. It's not an either-or situation; it's all hands on deck. And as Lao-Tsu said, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

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Seán Sheehan was an original staff member of the Center for a New American Dream (www.newdream.org), serving in a variety of management and communication capacities for more than a dozen years. He oversaw all of its online advocacy programs and campaigns, building a community of more than 100,000 individuals committed to shifting our cultural focus from “more is better” to one that inspires and empowers “more of what matters.” Sheehan currently works as the e-Vermont Community Director for the Vermont Council on Rural Development.



Citizens Shaping Their World

Rachel, sitting in her suburban home outside of Washington DC, heard about the water crisis in India and could not believe that women were walking four hours a day for life's most basic necessity. She thought about how long her walk for water was, counting the steps from her bedroom to the bathroom—12 steps covered in six seconds. No bucket to carry, no heavy pot balanced on her head. She simply needed to turn on the faucet, and safe drinking water flowed. The more she thought about it, the more it felt magical compared to the over two and a half billion people who lack access to sanitation and clean drinking water.¹

Rachel decided to do something about it. She had never given money to a community overseas and knew nothing about “international development.” As so many of us do when we don’t know something, she went online and Googled “water India.” A project to build a well in Sanganguna Village on CitizenEffect.org appeared.

... Dan Morrison
... CitizenEffect.org



Rachel brought together her community with the goal of raising enough money to build a well for a community halfway around the world.



A child walks for miles in order to get water for his family. Rachel (above, dark grey t-shirt) helped his community build a well.

Sanganguna Village is a rural community in Gujarat, India. Women not only needed to walk long distances for water, but the trek left them with no time to work, run a business or earn an income.

Rachel was determined to partner with Sanganguna Village and build that well. But Rachel had a problem. She did not have the \$2,700 that Sanganguna Village needed. After all, she was only seven years old.

However, Rachel had the only things that really mattered—the passion to help a community in need and the desire to bring her friends and family together to help. She walked into her principal’s office and said she wanted to organize Walk4Water Day at the school. On a beautiful spring day, Rachel brought together her community with the goal of raising enough money to build a well for a community halfway around the world. Her classmates came, learned about the water crisis in India, carried water jugs across a field, and together, they raised \$3,700, \$1,000 more than Rachel’s goal.

Now Sanganguna Village has an accessible, sustainable source of clean water. Women have time to start businesses and earn an income. Children are attending school in greater numbers and for longer periods of time. Community health is improving. All because Rachel decided she had the power to act and be the change she wanted to see in the world.

Rachel was flexing her muscles as a citizen. She acted locally to organize her community to have an impact on a community in need of water. She defined herself much broader than just as a consumer and rejected the concept that the only duty of a citizen was to vote (even though she can’t vote for 11 years). She, like so many of her peers and elders in the Millennium generation, took an active role in creating the society she wants to live in.

No governments, no politics, no multilateral organizations and no corporations necessary. Rachel and Sanganguna Village are an example of citizens connecting with citizens to solve small but critical problems. Rather than focus on large unmanageable problems, Rachel and others are unlocking the potential of communities by completing small projects that empower people to be more self-reliant and in control of their own destiny. That is how the growing citizen effect movement works: small efforts and projects with direct visible impact.



Photo is courtesy Citizen Effect citizeneffect.org

Rachel had the only things that really mattered—the passion to help a community in need and the desire to bring her friends and family together to help.



Rachel's classmates (top) partnered with Sanganguna Village, raised the funds and built the well that the community needed.



Photos courtesy Jeremy M. Lange

Brother Ray Eurquhart (left) and Paul Reickoff (right) are two citizens changing the world around them.

Today, citizens of all ages are not only looking to government, non-profits and international organizations to mitigate global water and food crises, stop genocides, fight HIV/AIDS and halt climate change and save the environment.

They are seeking ways to do it themselves.



Photos courtesy Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Today, citizens of all ages are not only looking to government, non-profits and international organizations to mitigate global water and food crises, stop genocides, fight HIV/AIDS and halt climate change and save the environment. They are seeking ways to do it themselves.

A lifelong resident of Durham, North Carolina, Ray Eurquhart has been a community activist for more than 40 years. Now in his 60s, the Air Force veteran and former city employee known as Brother Ray “is on a crusade to clean up the crime, replenish affordable housing and restore vitality” in his neighborhood. From picking up litter to running the local community center, Brother Ray is also a member of the community’s redevelopment steering committee and is involved in a project to turn abandoned properties into livable, affordable homes. “Everything starts from self-interest,” said Brother Ray. “I live over here, and so did my mother and father and father’s mother. It was the village that brought us up. It taught us the value of community.”²

“Everything starts from self-interest,” said Brother Ray. “I live over here, and so did my mother and father and father’s mother. It was the village that brought us up. It taught us the value of community.”

In 2005, Dwight Owens suffered life-threatening injuries after being hit by a drunk driver. Although now confined to a wheelchair, Dwight is dedicated to serving others. Working with AmeriCorps’ Linking Individuals into Neighborhoods and Communities project, he supports over 1,200 individuals with disabilities. He also works to ensure accessibility and independence by conducting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) site surveys and providing life skills training sessions. Dwight helps individuals transition from public institutions to their own homes and facilitates a support group for men with disabilities to encourage independence and leadership.³

Iraq War veteran Paul Rieckhoff wanted to improve the lives of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families. After returning to the US from Baghdad in 2004, Rieckhoff created the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). IAVA helps veterans become leaders in government, business and communities. The result is not just better care for veterans, but also a population

that understands the causes and consequences of war. By 2015, IAVA expects to have 175,000 veteran members and an additional 400,000 supporters.⁴

Rachel and others are ensuring that citizens will be the defining factor for 21st-century philanthropy. Micro-philanthropy sites like Citizen Effect, GlobalGiving, Crowdrise and microfinance sites like Kiva are allowing citizens to partner with communities in need around the world and see the direct results of their efforts without the bureaucracy of large foundations and non-profits. You give directly to a project and have a direct line of sight into the impact you have on the community. This was impossible 20 years ago; today Rachel can send money to Sanganguna Village, and a woman in Sanganguna can take a photo of the well with her phone and send it to Rachel.

Technology is a major reason why citizens are retaking control of society. You no longer need millions of dollars to connect with and support an entrepreneur or

Technology is a major reason why citizens are retaking control of society. You no longer need millions of dollars to connect with and support an entrepreneur or help a community in need.

help a community in need. Technology, the Internet and mobile communication are connecting people of all income levels from all over the world to fund projects, solve problems and raise the voices of those that are oppressed and fighting for their rights and lives.

Recognizing the absurdity of wasted food, Jonathan Leung began recovering otherwise wasted food from his school cafeteria and delivering it to a homeless shelter in Philadelphia. He turned to technology to involve more students in the process of transporting food to those in need. Using a Google application, he created a volunteer sign-up form, which is exported to a spreadsheet and then to a map, allowing him to quickly determine how to best match volunteers with businesses for food pickup and shelters for deliveries. As the project expanded, Jonathan created Helping Hunger, a student-driven organization that has “rescued” nearly 7,500 pounds of food from caterers and restaurants, and transported it to soup kitchens and homeless shelters.⁵



High school students from Sugar Land, Texas partnered with their local supermarket to host a food drive.

Global problems are being redefined. Statistics that say “1.4 billion people live below \$1.25 a day and 2.6 billion lack access to sanitation” are being replaced with “110 people in Sanganguna Village need \$2,700 to build a sustainable well to access clean water.” The first statistic is abstract and unsolvable for even the wealthiest philanthropist. The second is tangible and doable for a group of friends that get together and leverage their social network to raise the money and to transform the lives of a community.

Citizens will by no means replace the role of governments, political parties, venture capitalists, USAID or the Gates Foundation. These established organizations address crises and provide funding that large-scale problems require. However, citizens are beginning to take back control of these organizations that once worked for them, not on behalf of them like they do today. At Citizen Effect, we estimate that, in a few years, \$1 spent on empowering citizen philanthropists will

result in \$15 raised for small but critical projects in the field. Citizens are force multipliers, and large organizations can leverage them to have a much greater impact at the community level where large programs are not as effective.

When Rachel set out to help Sanganguna Village, she did not know what “development” was. She did not have a master plan for Sanganguna and how to “lift them out of poverty.” But she did have the passion to help people in need and wanted to do her part to be a positive change in the world. At the end of the day, she was just a citizen who decided she had a responsibility to others, and she could bring together other citizens to make a real difference and help build a more self-reliant and sustainable world. Rachel is a leader in the citizen effect movement that is transforming politics, entrepreneurial markets and philanthropy.

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Dan Morrison is the CEO and founder of Citizen Effect (www.citizeneffect.org), an entrepreneurial non-profit that empowers anyone to be a philanthropist. After a career as an innovation and brand strategy consultant, Morrison went to the University of Chicago and received a master's in Middle Eastern Studies. In 2006, Morrison was invited to India by the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), where he met a woman who needed to walk four hours for water. Morrison went home, sent a holiday card to friends and family and raised \$5,000 to build a well in her village. Ever since, Morrison has been helping everyday citizens connect directly to communities in need around the world to build a more self-reliant and sustainable life.



Helping Others: Finding the Will and the Way

There is a special power that is created when a young person learns to open his or her eyes and discover, in his or her own soul, the living, pulsing, breathing dreams of another. I believe that this discovery is the key to social change for people of any age or background, and it has been my quest to demonstrate this truth to girls and to the world.

It was in the summer of 2007 that this journey began. My idea then was simple: empower girls to fulfill their potential by training them to solve community problems—from sex trafficking to unequal access to education to health services inequities. I, along with the three friends I recruited for the project, soon realized that although no set of goals could include everything we might do—no program or organization or single individual could solve all of the issues we must confront—we could focus our energies on one idea and develop it really well. So we launched our first chapter in India, then Ghana, then Nigeria. Then almost surreally, we started receiving phone calls and emails from girls in other countries, like Turkey and Bangladesh, from girls who were itching to change realities but simply did not know how.



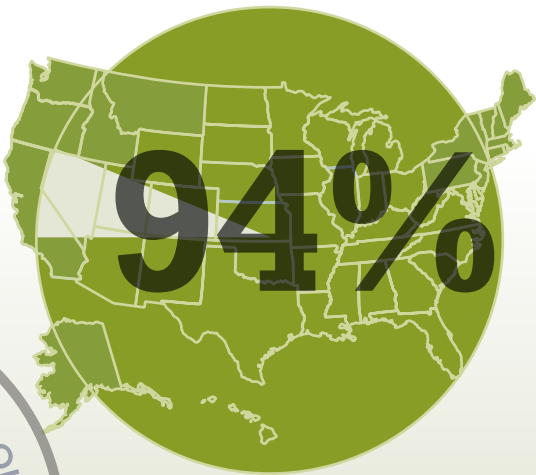
Sejal Hathi
Girls Helping Girls



With help from Girls Helping Girls, this community in India was able to build a library to help continue the education of their girls.

And like a viral message, our mission spread and spread until it became a global movement unrestrained by a single director, but burgeoning with a mind of its own. Today, less than three years after first sketching our logo on a piece of scrap paper in the high-school library, our small team has mobilized and trained over 30,000 young women to create innovative and substantive change. With no hired advisors and not even a board of directors, we have provided girls from more than 20 countries the one-on-one mentorship, toolkits, funding and support network to build their own microenterprises, advocate against human rights abuses, construct holistic income-generation programs and create sustainable development initiatives in their communities. And we have raised over \$60,000 to enable girls around the world to go to school.

Somehow, in some way, what we are doing is working, and girls are opening their eyes to their potential.



Statistics show that 94% of youth in America feel powerless to make a difference.

Girls Helping Girls proves that anything is possible.

Like a viral message, our mission spread and spread and spread until it became a global movement, burgeoning with a mind of its own.

Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan memorably declared that educating and empowering girls is the key to world peace and the most effective tool for global development. The World Bank demonstrated that investing in women raises economic productivity several-fold, empowering entire communities and countries. And Secretary of State Hillary Clinton this year insisted that the world cannot progress if women and girls are denied their rights and left behind.

Yet, seven years after Annan's statement, millions of girls across the globe are not realizing their intrinsic power: Instead of saving the world, they are eroding their potential, falling victim to over 80 percent of human trafficking cases,¹ over 70 percent of illiteracy cases² and over 75 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's HIV cases in youth.³ I could go on and on with the statistics, but the point is that, all across the globe, girls are losing self-dominion to a culture that decrees their duty is to cater to others and to mold themselves into casts set by society. We are trying to change this culture.

I want to tell you about Maria from California, who at age 17 belonged to an immigrant family without experience in the American education system. Maria told me that she often felt lost and hopeless and incapable of achieving anything worthwhile. Her family was falling apart, and her peers were dropping out of school in droves. Maria had become close to a schoolteacher, who showed her a newspaper article about our work to empower girls. Immediately, Maria said, "My attitude changed completely,



I strive to empower this movement, by helping the world realize that our strengths lie in one another.

We are all a mosaic of gifts, and all of us possess the rich power to shape our globe and assert ourselves as ambassadors for change.



All photos courtesy Girls Helping Girls



With support from Girls Helping Girls, Mumtaz escaped an abusive relationship and along with her friends, started a food catering service, which allows her to support her family on her own.

Mumtaz taught me that when we give to others what we care about the most, we allow ourselves to rebuild all that is broken within us, and thus to redefine our own potential.

because I finally felt like I could do something, be someone.” Today, Maria is the first in her family to attend college and, through Girls Helping Girls’ social entrepreneurship program, is creating her own initiative to prevent other youth from falling victim to depression and the dropout crisis in her community.

Maria showed me that every region of the world and every girl on this planet has something deep, tangible and worthwhile to offer. We can demonstrate this power to even the most battered girls by helping them to rebaptize their hardships as their strengths and leverage their challenges as their greatest assets for change.

I want to tell you about 25-year-old Mumtaz from India, who just five years ago was beaten constantly by her husband. One of our grassroots partners in India began helping her and providing free daycare for her daughter. When Girls Helping Girls visited Mumtaz’s community, we worked with Mumtaz and her friends to develop a sustainable self-help group, training them in business enterprise and loaning the group \$1,500 to create a food catering service. Now, Mumtaz is preparing to move into her own home with her daughter. And to heal from the abuses she suffered from her husband, she is sharing her own story and her own lessons with

other women, thereby preventing them from falling into the same cycle of abuse she experienced.

Mumtaz taught me that when we give to others what we care about the most, rather than suffer more, we allow ourselves to rebuild all that is broken within us, and thus to redefine our own potential.

This is what I call self-transformation. And it is this spirit, this animus of collective self-awareness, that I seek to inspire in the swelling community of girls I work with every day.

I believe that all girls and all youth are a movement: a united and unstoppable force that can eradicate poverty, increase access to healthcare, reverse environmental degradation and solve the world’s most pressing problems—if only they are given the tools and the opportunity. I strive to empower this movement, by helping the world realize that our strengths lie in one another and by energizing and equipping potential. We are all a mosaic of gifts, and all of us possess the rich power to shape our globe and assert ourselves as ambassadors for change. If I could do one thing to change the world, it would be to awaken this active consciousness in every individual.

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Sejal Hathi is a student at Yale University studying biology and international relations. An avid social entrepreneur, Sejal founded the international non-profit Girls Helping Girls at age 15 and, as CEO, has since trained thousands of girls worldwide to incubate entrepreneurial projects addressing global issues in more than 20 countries. Among several other projects, she has additionally served on the boards of several international non-profits, coauthored a monographic book and spoken for and advised political leaders, corporate executives and philanthropists from around the world on youth development issues and the benefits of investing in women and girls.



The Power of Young People to Change the World

: T.A. Barron
: Author and Prize Founder

If I could give today's young people three wishes, they would be:

More hugs.

More time outside in nature.

More belief in their own power to change the world.

While most people understand the importance of the first two wishes, the third one leaves some folks scratching their heads, wondering why young people's belief in their own power is so essential.

Let's start with the notion that all of us—especially young people—need heroes. We need them to be our guides on the twisting, sometimes difficult trail we call life. To show us just how far we can go, to help us know just how high we can climb.

Truth is, there is a potential hero, a future difference maker, in every young person. Each of them, from whatever background, is a bundle of untapped energy.

And we need heroes today more than ever. Our modern society is terribly confused about the difference between a hero and a celebrity. And the difference is crucial.

A celebrity is all about fame—temporary, superficial fame, usually for qualities that are easy to see: a pretty face, a good hook shot, a great dance move. A hero, by contrast, is about character—qualities beneath the surface that aren't visible until they prompt action. Qualities like courage, hope, compassion and perseverance.

Heroes, real heroes, are all around us. They truly hold our world together, through their unselfish devotion to helping others, supporting families, teaching children, protecting the environment. They don't want fame, or glory, or even credit; they just want to help. In so many ways, these unsung heroes steer the boat in which all of us sail.

Yet young people hear a lot more about celebrities than about heroes, in every form of media. Worse yet, young people are treated too often as just another target market by advertisers. The underlying message they get from all this is that their self-worth comes from what they buy—which drink, which shoes, which cellphone—not who they are down inside.

What gets lost in this? Young people's sense of their own potential for heroic qualities—their own power to make a positive difference in the world.

Truth is, there is a potential hero, a future difference maker, in every young person. Each of them, from

whatever background, is a bundle of untapped energy—a positive force who can do something to steer that communal boat that carries us all.

All it takes for that to be true is belief. For if young people believe in their own power, they will use it. And they will discover that any person—regardless of gender, age, race, cultural background or economic circumstance—can make a genuine, lasting impact.

How do we help skeptical young people believe in their own power?

The best way by far is simply to share examples of other young people who have made a difference. Those stories carry real inspiration, and they speak for themselves.

To turn the spotlight on such amazing young people and share their stories, I founded a national award, the Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes. Named after my mom, who was a quiet hero in my own life, this award, now in its tenth year, honors 25 young people annually. They come from every background, and they are as diverse as the youth of America. The one thing they all have in common is a belief in their own power to make a difference—and the dedication to make it happen.

This prize is really just a small thing, but its winners are shining examples of what young people can achieve. And I hope that those examples might inspire other young people to discover their own power to make a difference.

Here are a few of the winners from recent years:

Katie, age 10, has rallied hundreds of people in her town in South Carolina to help her create vegetable gardens to feed the hungry. How did she begin? As a third grader, she raised a tiny seedling into a huge 40-pound cabbage. When she saw how many people that cabbage fed at a local soup kitchen, she decided that she could do more. So far, she has donated more than 1,000 pounds of fresh produce to people in need.



Photo courtesy Katie's Krops



Photo courtesy Ryan and Ryan's Well Foundation

Ryan, age 11, has worked tirelessly to raise money to provide clean drinking water to African villages. When he first heard about the plight of African children who died from impure water, Ryan was only six years old. He decided to do something about it. In the next five years, he raised over \$500,000—enough to build over 70 water wells.

Barbara, age 17, grew up on a farm in Texas. When she realized that local farmers were pouring their used motor oil into rivers and on the ground, causing pollution, she organized the creation of a recycling center for crude oil. Her project, called Don't Be Crude, has grown to include 18 recycling centers in Texas.



Anthony, age 12, created Heavenly Hats which has provided over 10,000 new hats to people who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy and other medical treatments. He started this project when his grandmother was diagnosed with cancer and lost her hair, motivating him to make her a hat to lift her spirits. Now, from his home in Wisconsin, he distributes hats donated from people around the world.



Ellie, age 17, was volunteering at a center for Hispanic children in the Los Angeles area when she realized that many young people had difficulty speaking English clearly enough to succeed in school and find jobs. So she organized dozens of volunteers to create a website, RepeatAfterUs.com, to provide audio clips of over 5,000 texts to help anyone learn English as a second language.

Shawn, age 18, founded Garden Angels at his high school in Brooklyn, New York, to transform an abandoned, trash-filled lot into a community garden. The hardest part of this task was to convince his peers that they could do better than hanging out with local gangs, that they could really change their community. His success leads Shawn to declare: "Every person, no matter how small, can make a difference."



Photo courtesy Ashoka



Chloe, age 17, founded the Climate Action Club at her school in Maine to help local residents do something to combat climate change. Overcoming resistance and skepticism, she persevered. Recently, the reusable bag campaign she initiated was adopted as the model for a state-wide program to reduce waste.

Jaclyn, age 16, survived a bout with brain cancer as a child—and was encouraged by her friends on the University of Maryland Women's Lacrosse team. She decided to help other kids with cancer by creating an organization to pair those kids with college athletic teams whose support could aid the healing process. To date, more than 200 young people have been adopted by teams around the country.



Otana, age 15, discovered that the air purifier used by her asthmatic mother might actually be producing harmful levels of toxic ozone. She did her own scientific research after school; then began to share her findings with local and state officials. This culminated in her presentation to the California Air Resources Board, which then developed new regulations and became the first state to ban the sale of ozone-emitting air purifiers.



Ashley, age 16, visited Africa with her family and was deeply upset by the lack of educational opportunities for girls. When she returned home to Colorado, she started AfricAid, a non-profit organization to help provide schools for girls in Tanzania. In the years since its founding, AfricAid has helped educate over 40,000 young Africans.

The list could go on and on. These are but a few examples of young people who have discovered that they can build on their own energy and ideals to do something truly great.

And yet ... maybe "great" isn't the right word. As Mother Teresa once said, "I have done no great deeds. But I have done many small deeds ... with great love."

Let's all share such stories of empowered young people and do whatever we can to support the next generation in creating their vision for the future. The more we do that, the more those young people will steer our world's boat and fill its sails with love.

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T.A. Barron (www.tabarron.com), author of more than 20 books for young people and founder of the Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes (www.barronprize.org), lives in Colorado.

